(c) It is anticipated that the first two projects will be sanctioned by Spetember, 1997, and the third is likely to be cleared by March, 1998.

Imported items used for road Construction

120. SHRI VEDPRAKASH P. GOYAL: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPOT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the 12 items used for road construction which are not being manufactured in India; as reported in the Economic times of 5th June, 1997;

(b) whether the quantities to be imported are subject to any scrutiny so that imports are related strictly to these items;

(c) which indigenously made equipments have been considered as a substitute to the imported items; and

(d) whether it has been found that these works cannot be carried out efficiently by human labours which is surplus and available in all parts of the country?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (c) The road constrcution equipments proposed to be imported free of duty are those which are not manufactured in India.

(d) Yes, Sir.

Bridge Across the river Nethravathi In Mangalore, Karnataka

121. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the progress in completion of the Bridge across the river Nethravathi in Mangalore, Karnataka, is very slow and if so, the reasons for such lethargy; and

(b) the details of the project and its estimated cost and date of completion?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) The sanctioned cost of the bridge over River Nethravathy is Rs. 761.50 lakhs and the likely date of completion is June, 1998.

Concessions to foreign Investors for construction of roads

122. SHRI RAJ NATH SINGH:
SHRIMATI MALTI SHARMA:

Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state.

(a) whether Government have since decided to offer some special concessions to foreign investors for investment in the construction of roads;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether any foreign investors have since applied for the same;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) Government's response thereto?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) A policy package has been announced for attracting private investment both domestic and foreign, in the development of National Highways. The policy provides for the selection of the investor through competitive bidding and does not provide for any special concession to foreign investors.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) and (e) Do not arise.

Policy for one-time payment of road ta for Different Categories of Vehicles

123. SHRI PARMESHWAR KUMA AGARWALLA: Will the Minister SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased state:

(a) the policy for one-time payment of road tax for different categories of vehicles;

(b) whether there are State-wise variation; if so, the details thereof and under what provisions of law;

(c) the status of a vehicle for payment of road tax, if one-time is paid in a State, say in Maharashtra or Gujarat, and then the vehicle shifts to another State, say to West bengal or Bihar; and

(d) whether the road tax is to be paid again; if so, under what provision, and action Government proposes to bring uniformity?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) to (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the Rajya Sabha.

Fund for Upgradation of State Highways

124. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sanctioned fund for the upgradation of some State Highways during 1997-98;

(b) whether World Bank has also provided fund for the same purpose; and

(c) if so, the State-wise details of the Highways accorded fund sanctioned from the Central Government as well as World Bank?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) and (b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

Details of State Highways/Express Highways Funded by Central Government

125. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) the details of the State Highways/ Express Highways and State Roads of economic importance of different States funded by the Government during 8th Five Year Plan;

(b) the Highways and State Roads identified in Orissa and other States for Central funding for repairing and upgradation during 9th Five Year Plan; and

(c) the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T.G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Under the Centrally sponsored scheme of E&I sixteen (16) projects involving central share of appx. Rs. 50 crores have been finally sanctioned during the 8th plan.

(b) 9th Plan is yet to be finalised.

(c) Does not arise.

Research and Technology in the field of Geo-Synthetics

126. SHRI SANJAY DALMIA: Will the Minister of SURFACE TRANSPORT be pleased to state:

(a) whether the geo-synthetics, the new construction material is being successfully used for various civil engineering works including construction of roads in U.S. and other countries;

(b) whether India has started its research and technology in the field of geo-synthetics;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken for setting up of geo-synthetic manufacturing industries in India, especially in hill areas and natural disaster prone areas?

THE MINISTER OF SURFACE TRANSPORT (SHRI T. G. VENKATRAMAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) yes, Sir. Considerable research has been carried out by various Institutions in India. GEO-synthetics has been used in construction of reinforced